**The Snowy Day**

**The Fall Equinox**

*By: Luisa Uriarte*

The tree sways, autumn

Leaves fall like snow, red, orange

The breeze whistling

*By: Geeta Sharma*

It was a snowy day

When all the soft, white snow

Fell on the ground

  
I stepped one foot in its crispy

Ground

And heard it go. “Crunch, crunch”

I smiled

After hearing the music through my ears,

I stares ahead

Three kids were building

Something white

I got closer and squinted my eyes

The snow kept making sounds

“Crunch, crunch”

The white thing had a hat

A scarf

Two buttons, a carrot nose

And a smile

As I touched it

The cold skin fell on my hands

I smiled with him

As I realized it was a happy little

Snowman



These are the things I did

On the snowy days

Of yesterday.

**The Social Media**

*By: Allyson Espinal and Karen Sepulveda*

Social media, such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, has brought both negative and positive aspects to our lives.  While positive examples are the ability to connect with friends and family or the ability to spread information, there are also negatives such as cyber-bullying and the contributing to climate change.  Let explore something as complex as social media, something so unique that it can connect us and disconnect us at the same time.

Let’s start with the positive aspects of social media. It can be a great tool to get people aware of the issues in the world or spread information, for example endangered animals like okapis, Saolas (also known

as Asian unicorns), and Hawks or medical problems such as cancer, and cystic fibrosis. Another good aspect about the social media is that you and others can connect with family members or friends that you don’t see often or live far away, allowing us to keep in touch with loved ones you normally would lose touch with.

Like most things in life, there are also negative aspects to social media. One that has been in the news a lot in the last few years is cyberbullying. Now cyberbullying is one of the most negative things about the social media, why you may ask, well one reason is because three million kids per month are absent because of cyberbullying multiply that by 12 its about 36,000,00 school absences per year because of cyberbullying. Another reason why cyberbullying is one of the most negative things about the social media is because about 4500 kids commit suicide every year because of it.  Another issue is privacy. A thing that you would like to keep private or personal will become public thanks to settings on social media sites like Facebook.

As you can see dear reader, social media has good and bad aspects and is something that needs to be handled carefully. As users, we have to be mindful of others’ feelings and respect things that others want to keep private; this way social media can be used as a great tool for good.

**The Test of Judgments**

*By Kilala Vincent (writer) and Luisa Uriarte (editor)*

The New York State Test. Those five words put together have enough power to send most of the student body on edge and running for their lives. This test, starting from 3rd grade to the 8th grade has been around for years, testing students on how “smart” they are. I mean, can a bunch of questions really determine how intelligent you are? Being tested on how “smart” you are based on questions made by a bunch of grown ups is just not fair.

Studying day after day, growing gray hairs from all of the stress and anxiety of these tests. As an eighth grader, I honestly believe that these tests are pointless and annoying to study for. Not only is it annoying, it robs us, as students, of actually learning something that doesn’t have to do with something on a test. In one of my ELA classes, Megan, my teacher, asked the class to silently write down what we think about the state tests on a post-it, and put it up on the board. As Megan read all of the words and phrases we put down, all of them had negative connotations. There were words like “annoying”, “boring” and “stressing” that were repeated several times.

The people who make the test just don’t know the way you work, the way you think, or the way your brain works, so how can a question judge that? There is more to a test, at least should be, than just how you write your answers. A quote by Albert Einstein goes like this, “Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid,” which exactly proves my point of students being judged in an unfair way. Not everybody can be judged by the same questions, by the same standards, and then expected for their scores to judge whether they are smart or dumb.

An example of a historical scientist is Isaac Newton. Isaac Newton had Asperger’s syndrome, which is a type of autism. He had trouble learning like everybody else, and was considered “dumb” and “behind”. He later became one of the smartest men alive, pursuing many different sciences, even creating the theory for gravity.  Another famous guy who was considered “dumb” was Einstein. He dropped out of school because he couldn’t do the math right, yet he is one of the greatest scientists and thinkers the world has ever known. Maybe you aren’t going to be the next Einstein, that’s okay, but it just goes to show you that tests are not always accurate.

On top of that, many people I know have test anxiety, including myself. I just completely forget whatever I just learned and I stare blankly at the test. This happens especially during big tests that can determine your fate like the State Test. Then later on, when you get the test back, with a bad grade you end up looking really dumb and silly.

I guess what I’m trying to say is that the New York State Test is just overwhelming and overly exaggerated. They give it too much credit. It’s not what it is told to be. The test isn’t as big a deal as people like to make it seem. All it does is show that you know how to answer questions and that you can spit back whatever they want to see, not who you are and how your brain works or what goes on in there. They think they can give you a test and give you a number. You are much more than a number that reflects how well you spat the answers out. You are you, not a number. You shouldn’t be judged on how high you scored. School is a place to learn and discover, not to practice for some test that’s supposed to tell how smart you are. The lies they tell us.  After all, you are more than a grade on a piece of paper.